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FUGITIVE
VERSES



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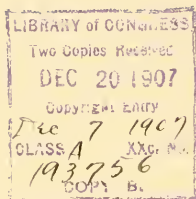


FUGITIVE POEMS

BY

SELMA WARE PAINE

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1907

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BY
SELMA WARE PAINE

IN MEMORY OF MY MOTHER
MARY J. PAINE
AND FOR MY OWN DEAR CHILDREN
ALBERT AND MARTHA
IT IS MY PLEASURE TO GIVE
PERMANENT FORM TO THESE VERSES
OF AUNT SELMA

L. A. C.

CHRISTMAS 1907



THE LEGEND OF THE MOSQUE OF SAINT SOPHIA

When Moslem hordes Byzantium sacked
They everywhere the city racked.
Not even Saint Sophia stayed
Their cruel, all destroying raid.
The sacred walls no shelter gave;
They rode their chargers up the nave
And trampled down with iron hoof
The people gathered 'neath the roof.
And yet, in spite of startled cry,
The shout of angry foemen nigh,
The ring of consecrated stones
From horses' feet, the dying moans,—
The priest, who at the altar stair
Had just begun to chant his prayer,—
Still chanted on as calmly there
As of the horrors unaware.

*THE LEGEND OF THE
MOSQUE OF SAINT SOPHIA*

In tranquil voice, devout and clear,
With not a shade of haste or fear,
He said the holy Catholic Mass.

When closer yet, the horde drew near
He did not seem to see or hear
Until they pressed at left and right
And quenched the candles in his sight ;
And then he turned to where was spread
The sacrament. He took the bread,
He held the wine above his head,
And with a look sublime that said
“Christ’s servant never yet has fled,”
He walked with firm and equal tread
The only open way. It led
To solid minster wall. And lo,
As once of old the sea did know
To ope a way for Israel’s host
And close again, the people crossed,
So now the wall did part in twain,
Receive the priest and close again,
While e’en the Moslems paused to hear

*THE LEGEND OF THE
MOSQUE OF SAINT SOPHIA*

3

From just behind the walls anear
A tranquil voice, devout and clear,
With not a shade of haste or fear
Repeat the holy Catholic Mass.

Stern Islam now the minster ruled
And all the conquered building schooled
To speak its mandates. Much they burned
And when they marked the altar turned
To Christ's Jerusalem its face,
They tore it rudely from its place
And made it look to Mecca. Still,
Listening oft against their will
The very workmen could but hear
From just behind the wall anear
A tranquil voice, devout and clear
Repeat the holy Catholic mass.

And yet behind the walls, they say,
The priest imprisoned, waits the day
That brings the end of Moslem sway,
And now at times they hear the tone

*THE LEGEND OF THE
MOSQUE OF SAINT SOPHIA*

Of his devotions through the stone.
The legend cries with prophet voice
“That day will come. Let man rejoice!”
And then the walls will part in twain,
The faithful priest come out again.
Within his hand will be the bread;
He’ll hold the wine above his head,
And climb with firm and equal tread
The altar stairs, to finish there
As he began, his chanted prayer.
In tranquil voice, devout and clear,
With not a shade of haste or fear,
He’ll end the holy Catholic Mass.

TO AN INVETERATE DREAMER

If your castle in Spain were firm on the plain,
And you dwelt in its beautiful halls;
If its fountain of youth were playing in truth
And the light of your dreams on its walls :—

What then would you do with the hours as they flew
In your beautiful castle in Spain?

Alas, you would yearn from the beauty to turn
To the pleasure of building again

Another fair castle in Spain,
Another fair castle in Spain!

LIMITS

What are these bounds I cannot overpass,
As soft as breath, invisible as air,
And yet as strong as walls of triple brass?
My effort any glorious height would dare,
My thought, fleet-footed, fear no distant goal,
Did not the bounds confront them unaware.
Then thus to me replies the over soul,
“Behold the rushing waves that seek the strand;
Each farther up, successive surges roll,
And prone and unresisting lies the land—
When lo, the tide is turned, the waves disperse.
Before each finite power its limits stand.
It is the order of this universe.”

The order of the universe must be
To keep us humble to Divinity.
Lest, ere it has been fired, the clay
Should to the shaping Potter say
“I stand alone;” and fall to dust away.

IF I WERE YOU

If I were you, if I were you,
My little child with eyes so blue,
 So love enfolded, free from care,
 Of evil yet so unaware—
No tear should e'er mine eye bedew.

I'd dance and sing the daylight through,
And gather flowerets where they grew,
 As if I knew the time were rare
 If I were *you*.

But yet my foolish thought I rue.
The time were over if you knew.
 With childish years the heart must pair,
 A shattered toy would mean despair
To break my heart with weeping, too,
 If I *were* you.

MY DREAM

I had a dream, and it was sweet.
I saw a soul and body part,
And ere the spirit spread its wings
To rise in glad ethereal flight,
He turned his radiant face and stooped
And kissed the body where it lay.

He had the look of one who sees
Some precious gift outworn, at last,
Yet dear to him for memory's sake.
He did not call it "prison house,"

Nor utter one reproachful word,
But softly said "It served me well,
It gave me feet to run my ways;
It gave me hands to work my will;
It gave me eyes to see with joy

The beauty of the outer world
That holds the meaning of the Lord.

And as the spirit hovered there,
His tender reminiscent smile
Illumed the impress he had left
Upon the pallid face beneath
Until it, also, seemed to smile.

A moment thus, and then he spread
His wings like sister bows of light.
At first he slowly backward flew
Then, turning, cleft the upper blue
And sought the living, left the dead.

DANTE, LOVER OF THE LIGHT

“Shall I not everywhere enjoy the light
Of sun and stars?” In exile, Dante said,
Who loved the lighted tent the heavens spread;
Whose friends were luminaries in the height;
By light, who symbolized holiness and right;
Who made his angels flames and, upward led,
No greater word could find at heavens head
For the Eternal than—“One Simple Light.”

Yet Dante this who walks the thoughts of men
A form of gloomy darkness from the fen
Of his Inferno's black or lurid night.
Oh, add the other half that, true and whole,
His fame may wear the likeness of his soul,
And call him Dante, Lover of the Light.

I DARE NOT

I dare not to dull me with feasting and wine,
Lest the meaning of music I should not divine;

Lest beauty go by me, and I unaware;
Lest fragrance unscented exhale in the air.

I dare not to tarnish my thinking for fear
The lilies grow pallid whenever I near.

I dare not to harbor a hate at my heart
Lest sunbeams that enter make haste to depart.

I dare not to load me with doubtings so deep,
No dreams with a blessing would lighten my sleep.

THE RAREST DAYS.

The rarest days of all the year,
When wordless joy my heart beguiles,
Are those when Spring in Winter's arms,
New born, awakes and smiles.

Though still her draping robes of snow
The Winter regnant seems to wear,
Behold a miracle! How soft
Her light, her mist, her air!

Above the earth, below the sky,
From far away a sound is heard
Ethereal as spirit tone—
It is a herald bird.

We know, perhaps, that soon again
The infant Spring her eyes will close:

But we have seen her and are sure
That while she sleeps, she grows.

Such days a blissful wonder thrills
My very being through and through
To see the grand eternal Old
Beside the eternal New.

THE CAPTIVE BROOKLETS

Beneath a crust at dawn of Spring
The captive brooklets leap and sing;
A touch of sun is all they need
And lo, the prisoned streams are freed.

Just how the waters feel I know
For oft my thoughts are leaping so,
Unuttered, captive and repressed
Beneath a crust within my breast.

Oh, then, a smile like touch of sun
Can bid the loosened torrent run!
Oh, then, a glance like arctic blast
Beneath the crust can lock it fast!

OCTOBER

October is here, October is here,

The royally radiant queen of the year!

Her arches are golden, her tapestries spread;

Her hands are extended with bounty to shed

And her smile is a glow from a loftier sphere.

But what is the whisper assailing my ear?

October is way to the winter so drear.

The beautiful Summer is over and sped

If October is here.

Be silent, thou ominous whisper of fear,

If shivering Winter is menacing near,

By way of the Winter October was led.

Rejoice in the present before it is fled,

If Winter is there in the future, the dear

October is here.

THE MORNING GLORY

Oh Morning Glory, happy flower,
To bloom beloved, your early hour,
 Then softly close your eye;
And never learn the sun may beat
His blessing into fiery heat
 Nor feel the darkness nigh.

A Morning Glory child I knew;
He bloomed his dewy matin through,
 Then quietly passed away:
Nor learned how parched the earth may lie
Nor that the sun deserts the sky
 To bring another day.

TO THE WOOD PEWEE

(Who began to sing his Autumn song in June.)

Oh. gentle prophet of the year's decline,
Why mark so soon the shortening of the days?
The blooming Summer yet has maiden ways
And, see, her cheek is roseleaf, fair and fine,
Her breath is fragrant with the flowering vine,
Her voice is full and firm with chorused lays.
Why then your sweet untimely warning raise,
Your autumn strain with summer song combine?
And yet an added harmony you bring.
There is a message in your music laid.
Could summer song its full perfection reach
Without a tone from Autumn and from Spring?
Of present, past and future, life is made
And what is perfect has a touch of each.

AN EVENING FANCY

When heaven holds Orion forth
 No belted hunter it appears;
It is an instrument of light
 That leads the music of the spheres.

From Rigel to Betelgeuse strung
 Across the gleaming central three,
My fancy draws the shining chords
 Too far away for us to see.

And thence the sweetest numbers swell
 That tune the circling nights and years,
But all too grand the mighty strain
 To enter in at mortal ears.

THE JESUIT'S SPRING
AT MOUNT DESERT

A little spring, a little spring,
So light, so slight, so frail a thing!
A cup of earth the water brims
Where low the sweeping swallow skims
A plain by sea and peak begirt
Upon the shore of Mount Desert!
A little spring, a little spring,
So light, so slight, so frail a thing!

Yet there in ages gone—they say,
The Indian quaffed—and went away
The French who sought the island bay
Took oft a draught—and went away.
The English came with rulers' sway,
And daily drank—and went away.
The atom men of either race

*THE JESUIT'S SPRING
AT MOUNT DESERT*

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Have left behind them not a trace,
Unless their dust is in the trees
That deck the mountains by the seas;
And yet the spring is flowing still
As fresh as any new born rill,
And stars in nightly passing o'er
Salute a sister on the shore,
And centuries that onward fare
Familiar greet a comrade there.

Thou little spring, thou little spring,
Thou light, thou slight, thou frailest thing,
Unfixed and formless, changing flow
Of countless drops that come and go,—
With power to last is thus endued
The gentle, yielding, oft renewed;
While force, defiant, falls a prey
To foe, to waste, to slow decay.

WHERE EARTH AND HEAVEN MEET

See yonder, radiant, soft and still
The sky is resting on a hill,
And I will speed with eager feet
To where the earth and heaven meet.

I run, I run, till set of sun—
No nearer I when day is done—
I run, I run, 'till dawn is gray—
But heaven is just as far away.

Wait, little man, nor waste thy breath,
An angel comes, the angel of death;
And he will bear thee, strong and fleet,
To where the earth and heaven meet.

THE DUAL

THE EVIL SPIRITS

The Dual is doubting,	Is discord, is combat,
Unholy, unwhole;	Is labor, unrest.
The Dual is tempter,	The Dual is evil
Disrupting the soul;	Defying the blest.

THE GOOD SPIRITS

The Dual is union	The Dual is music,
Conjoining aright.	Is marriage accord.
The sun, it is dual	With love and with wisdom
With heat and with light,	Is dual the Lord.

THE ANGELS

The Dual outgoeth
And lo, is the trine,
The one, the eternal,
The very Divine.

I AM NOT MY OWN.

Three things that repose not;
The river in flowing,
The coming and going
Of breathing and heart.

The river it knows not,
But, leaping or gliding,
Obeys to the guiding
That made it to start.

My heart and my breathing
Not needing my heeding,
So follow the leading
With which they began.

I list to the seething
At night, and the beating;

“The shuttle is fleeting”

I say, “with my span,

Is weaving the veiling

My spirit is given

To carry, unriven,

From cradle to tomb.

No stitch will be failing;

I'll lay me to sleeping.

The Weaver is keeping

His hand on the loom.”

SUGGESTED VERSES

Impotent pieces in the game He plays
Upon this checker-board of nights and days,
Hither and thither moves and checks and slays
And, one by one, back in the closet lays.

The ball no question makes of ayes and noes;
But right and left as strikes the Player goes
And he that tossed it down into the Field
He knows about it all—He knows—He knows.

* * * * *

O, Thou, who man of coarser earth didst make
And even with Paradise devise the snake;
For all the sin wherewith the face of man
Is blackened, man's Forgiveness give and take.

The Rubriyat of Omar Khayyam.

Who didst with Paradise devise the snake,
Of man the gratitude unmeasured take
That with tempter Thou didst give the choice
To heed or resist him and forsake.

For what were life but victory to win,
Or virtue but the conqueror of sin?

Or what were light but triumph over dark,
Or death, but birth to seeds of life within?

Or what were man, if in an endless round
Of equal happiness his days were found?

A babe in arms fed on a pap of bliss,
Or beast erect in silken fetters bound.

Aye then, not now, impotent pieces played;
Aye then, not now, the ball whose course is made.

Thou who with Paradise didst form the snake
O'er snake and man Thy love and law are laid.

TERZA RIMA

Thou, Terza Rima, never art completed.

No circled sonnet thou, in one compounding
Thy sense and music duly mixed and meted,
Within itself, itself so sweetly rounding.

Thou rather art a jeweled chain. Behind thee
Thou ever, though in concord so abounding,
Dost leave a waiting link of rhyme to bind thee;
And whereso'er thy lovely way may wander,
Before, there waits another link to find thee.

O, Terza Rima, happily I ponder

How truly thus our tale of life thou chimest
It, too, awaits completed rhyming yonder
As time into eternity thou rhymest.

L'ART POUR L'ART!

The casket for the casket,
And not to hold the gem?
The casket for the ruby,
The ring, the diadem.

Yet make it very royal
And golden if you will;
But let it shrine a jewel
More rare and royal still.

So be your poem, dearest,
A casket that is wrought
With noble art of wording
For gems of love and thought.

FAME

Oh, what is fame!
A sweet acclaim
When those we love exalt our name,
Or hear the praise that others raise,
Or see our bays.

But what is fame!
An echo tame,
Though laurel wreaths our temples frame.
With those we love no longer near,
There's none to hear.

OLD BOOKS

A thresher prime is father Time,
When harvest loads his wain
He beats the hollow husks aside,
And hoards the golden grain.

A winnower is father Time,
The chaff he blows away.
The sweetened seed he treasures up
For many a year and day.

Oh, very wise is father Time,
His flail is tried and true!
I love the garnered pile of books
He's winnowed through and through.

RONDEL

DE CHARLES D'ORLEANS

Le temps a laissié son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluie;
Et s'est vestu de broderie
De soleil, luisant, cler et beau.
Il n'y a beste ni oiseau
Qu 'en son jargon ne chante ou crie:
Le temps a laissié son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluie.
Rivière, fontaine et ruisseau
Portent en livrée jolie
Gouttes d'argent d'or favrerie;
Chacun s'abille de nouveau.
Le temps a laissié son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluie.

RONDEL. *Translation*

The weather now has laid aside
Its coat of wind and cold and rain;
Has clothed itself with robes again
Embroidered and in sunshine dyed.
No beast or bird that has not tried
In its own tongue to sing or plain;
The weather now has laid aside
Its coat of wind and cold and rain.
The fountain, brook and river wide
To wear a livery are fain
Of silver drops and jewelled train.
Each man in new attire has vied.
The weather now has laid aside
Its coat of wind and cold and rain.

SONNET

Heureux qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage,
Ou, comme cestui là, qui conquiert la toison,
Et puis est retourné, plein d'usage et raison,
Vivre entre ses parents le reste de son âge!

Quand revoiray-je, hélas! de mon petit village
Fumer la cheminée, et en quelle saison
Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison
Qui m' est une province, et beaucoup davantage!

Plus me plaist le séjour qu'ont basti mes ayeux
Que des palais romains le front audacieux;
Plus que le marbre dur me plaist l'ardoise fine;

Plus mon Loire gaulois que le Tybre latin,
Plus mon petit Lyré que le mont Palatin
Et plus que l'air marin la douceur angevine.

Joachim du Bellay

SONNET. *Translation*

How happy is the man whose journey safely ends
And as Ulysses once, or he that won the fleece,
Experienced and wise, returns to live at peace,
The remnant of his age to pass among his friends!

My little native town, alas, 'when shall I see
Its smoking chimneys rise, when shall I look again
Upon the close that holds my dwelling poor and plain,
Which all a province is, and more than that, to me!

More pleasing is to me my fathers' quiet home
Than the audacious front of palaces at Rome;
More pleases me the slate, than the hard marbles do.
Than Tiber's Latin stream more dear my Gallic Loire,
My little Lyré than Mount Palatin by far
And more than the sea air the sweetness of Anjou.



H O M E



TO MOTHER

Thy life gave light, dear mother, as thy face.

The love and truth that lit thine eye and brow
Are like a sun unsetting to me now
Whose rays illuminate each darkened place,
And would, within, unworthiness erase,
And all with light's nobility endow.

At thought of thee our kneeling spirits bow
In gratitude to the Celestial Grace.

Oh, gift of God to man that clearest shows

Of the Divine Paternal Image trace
Is parent love. In mother love it grows
And what it has received anew bestows

Until it binds by love the human race,—
And on to heavenly transformation goes.

DEAR FATHER'S EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY

Four score, four score! The darling years
I love them everyone,
From that which kissed his baby face
To that which crowns it with the grace
Of eighty summers' sun;

And strengthens it with eighty times
A winter's bracing cold.
How faint the traces of the care,
The labor and the sorrow there
The Psalmist has foretold.

"What is the mystery," they ask.
"Why does he not grow old?"

And speak of temperance, a heart
Of happy cheer, and so a part,—
A little part, is told.

They say with nature hand in hand
He gained her pristine wealth,
In that he balanced legal toil
With loving labor on the soil,
His garden mine of health.

But still the master mystery
The words do not define
For that which drives the shadows hence
Is his abiding confidence
In Providence Divine.

If sorrow rises in his cup,
He knows it should be quaffed.
He drinks it, names it not, forgets
And, hoping unabated, sets
His lips to sweeter draught.

Sustaining still his happy home,
 And turning eager glance
On thoughts and deeds of humankind
He helps with word and pen and mind
 And joys in man's advance.

So lightening life for all around
 By humor's happy play,
And working daily as in youth
And following his idea of truth
 He goes his blessed way.

AUGUST 16, 1892.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING ODE

The centuries have flown like flocks of birds
Since Sappho sang her spirit into words,
And yet the ages waft her message through
And are the carrier doves from her to you,—
To you, my darling parents, therefor hear
What Sappho sends to greet your golden year.

Oh, learn from voice sublime

And wonder sweet with time,
A meaning of this day that holds so much.
Yes, hear! “Gold is the child of Zeus rust cannot touch.”

Let baser metals yield to slow decay;
The tooth of rust through iron gnaw its way,
And cutting, cutting, let it blunt the pride
Of noble steel that cuts for all beside.
Let lofty bronze record heroic deeds

While greenish rust upon the record feeds;—
 But let the royal gold
 Its own forever hold,
And guard supreme the symbol's holy use;
For rust can never touch it. 'Tis the child of Zeus.

And so when wedded love has golden grown
No rust can touch it. 'Tis of Zeus the own.
The stream of years has only washed away
Whatever dross at first about it lay.
In furnace fire of life it has been tried,
And from alloy it has been purified.
 Triumphant as the sun,
 Undimmed, eternal one
It shines unto the new from out the old,
From Zeus to New Jerusalem with streets of gold.

JULY 9, 1890.

THE PRAYER OF A THIRSTING SOUL

BY MARY J. PAINE

The little flower, true to Thy bidding,
Drinks in at night Thy gift of dew;
So grant it, Lord, that I, too, waiting
May fill my soul from Thee anew.

So help me, Lord, with cheerful trusting
To do Thy will whate'er it be;
That I may find my heart, when thirsting,
Filled with the needed dew from thee.

EVER LISTENING

BY MARY J. PAINE

Listening, listening, ever listening
For the quiet breathing near;
For the gentle Voice saying
"I am here."

AT MOUNT HOPE

All loved her. E'en the locust bends
Above her grave with loving grace:
And see, a hovering bough descends
And parts in twain, as hands that bless
Or strive to touch with a caress
The name the granite letters trace!

So tenderly if nature yearns,
Oh, mother of the heavenly heart,
Where but thy dust to dust returns,
How must thou be at home above
There where the very life is love,—
For love thou wast and ever art!

1902

ANEMONE AT MOUNT HOPE

Full fifty years ago beneath this mound,
That swells so softly from the sloping ground
It seems that nature must herself have made,
The fairest infant of an hour was laid.

And see, upon the grave the wind flower blows,
Most delicately exquisite that grows!
Anemone, no chiseled word could tell
The story of the little life so well.

Thou fleeting flower of passage, stainless star
That strains its stem to ride the wind afar;
And ever upward turns a longing face
To greet its kindred stars in upper space!

How like the soul that left the form below,
And yet unlike! It had no need to know
An earthly blooming, and was free to rise
To meet its angel kindred in the skies.

AUGUST IN OUR GARDEN

The air is full of twittering of birds,
The harsh imperious calling of the young,
The ceaseless chatter of the swifts on high.—
The air is full? But hark an undertone
The swarming of “innumerable bees”
Around the woodbine blossoms overhead.—
Yet is the air not full, for now I hear
The softer murmur of the summer breeze
Which rises, falls, and yet is ever there.

And so, methinks, the hearing perfect keen
Might pierce through underlying depths of
 sound

And depths and depths, until it reached at last
The great infolding silence that has held
The world since time began and still will hold—
Primeval silence mother of all sound.

SWEET PEA

As if you were only alight,
With pinions of pink and of white
Outspread for aerial flight,

Sweet Pea!

As if, when you found you were tied
And freedom to fly was denied,
Your longing in fragrance you sighed
To be free.

Yet always alert for a spring
And buoyant with hope that a swing
At last might unloosen your wing,

Sweet Pea.

And such was a life that I knew;
As longing and buoyant it grew,
As fettered and fragrant as you,

Sweet Pea!

THANKS TO THE LARCH

Like a syncopated music

Oh, my Larch, how sweet the way
Thou dost bear October's golden
Into the November gray!

For it is by lappings over

Bridging change to sight and sound,
That we pass in circled rhythm
Through the year's unbroken round.

HOME

I stood beneath Saint Peter's mighty dome
And called myself too happy that at last
My living feet had come where in the past
My wistful longings oft had flown from home;
That fair as fancy pictured her was Rome
Her flower of art as beautiful and vast;
That with the feelings that my dreams forecast
I now could read the world's historic tome.

I called myself too happy—but my thought
(So quickly that I had no time to chide)
E'en at this hour of fortune's utmost grace,
From all the beauty round me sprang aside
My distant home beyond the ocean sought
To rest upon a dear remembered face.

ROME

TO A VERY HAPPY CHILD

Oh, happy baby boy,
In verse could you express
One half your perfect joy,
Your radiant happiness,
All poems ever made
By any bard of old
Beside that verse of yours
Would be but poor and cold.

Oh, happy baby boy,
If you could put in songs
One half the perfect joy
That to your smile belongs,
The masters of the world,
From Palestrina down
Would to your melodies
Award the victor's crown.

Could singer take a draft
 From out that well of joy
You drink from every day,
 Oh, happy little boy,
And could he, also, be
 Endued with highest power
To sing it truly—then—
 Aye, in that very hour
The listening world would lie,
 Enraptured, at his feet,
Holding breath to hear
 A strain so heavenly sweet.

BIRTHDAY GREETING

Twenty-one. Twenty-one!
Something ended, something done,
Something only just begun!
Smile upon it, rain and sun.

For we watch it, and we love it
And we dream it fruited o'er.
And we say "May heaven bless it
From the root to seeded core!"

BIRTHDAY SONG

To tune of Auld Lang Syne

Each kindly friend, your singing lend,
The new is at the door:
For every birthday is a birth
Beginning living o'er.

Beginning living o'er, my friends,
Beginning living o'er!
For every birthday is a birth
Beginning living o'er!

But do not yet the past forget;
Before he turns and hies,
Say "Leave your lesson, friend"— and lo,
He blesses ere he flies.

He blesses ere he flies, my friend ,
He blesses ere he flies!
Say, "Leave your lesson friend," and lo,
He blesses ere he flies.

For what is best must bear the test
Of old and new combined.

The old must give the seed; the new
The ray, the rain, the wind.

The ray, the rain, the wind, my friend;
The ray, the rain, the wind.

The old must give the seed, the new
The ray, the rain, the wind.

Then singing, we will sow the seed
Together, comrades mine;
And hope the years will grow for us
A strong and fruitful vine;

A strong and fruitful vine, my friends,
A strong and fruitful vine;
And hope the years will grow for us
A strong and fruitful vine.

NEW YEAR, 1897.



A PRAYER

Oh, give us, Lord, the open mind
To welcome truth whate'er it be;
But vision keen to separate
The error that is not of Thee.

And give us, Lord, the open heart
For high and lowly, slave and free;
But keep it closed to any love
Not in accord with that to Thee.

And give us, Lord, the open soul.—
What most it needs we cannot see,
But make it from obstruction clear
A channel for the life from Thee.

SINGING PRAISE ALWAYS

And shall I praise Thee only where
 I see Thy blessings smile,
And not where altered blessings wear
 Misfortune's mien awhile?

Oh, no: for praise can pierce disguise
 And praise can understand,
And praise can feel the love that lies
 In sorrow's clasping hand.

And praise has found the true relief
 And knows the golden lore;
However great the cause for grief,
 For gratitude is more.

And resignation well can bear
 And prayer can lift on high,

But praise can better change our care
And make it fructify.

Then praise the Lord with thought and deed
Nor wait till blessings call
For those we neither hear nor heed
May be the best of all.

“I shall be satisfied when I awake With Thy likeness.”

(Psalm xvii: 15.)

When I awake; ah, yes, when I awake!

For now I wander in a troubled dream
Among deceitful shows that only seem
To be the goods whose borrowed forms they take.
And so I follow wealth as it would slake

My longing;—good report, as if a beam
Of praise could light my darkness;—beauty’s gleam
As it were saving grace,—till I awake.

Then open, Lord, these eyes so slumber-tied
That I may see by truth’s revealing flame
What baffles any skill at words to name;
The purest joy to deep content allied,
The ecstasy that can with calm abide,
That has Thy likeness and is satisfied.

“Blessed are ye that sow beside all Waters.”

Isaiah xxxii: 20.

What is the part of man? To sow.
He cannot make the harvest grow.
A little he can tend the seed,
And here and there remove a weed.
'Tis God that gives the sun and rain
The flower, the fruit, the seed again.—
And yet whate'er the harvest yield
To man the produce of the field.

And in myself as small my part;
I did not start my beating heart;
I watch my breathing come and go;
I cannot make it fast or slow.
I feel the life within me swell,
But how it works I cannot tell.

And yet for me these forces blend,
The strength is mine to use and spend.

Then help us, Lord, the fields to sow
Without, within, where waters flow.
If full or scant the harvest be
The fruit of deeds we leave to Thee
Nor send to count our profits o'er
A dull anxiety before.
If others reap where we have sown
We glean from harvests not our own.

Thou askest not from arid plain
The model sheaf of ripened grain;
Of feeble powers Thou askest naught
Of perfect deed, of wisest thought,
And knoweth well Thy guardian eye
When barrens only fallow lie,
And when the tardy seeds await
The fitting hour to germinate.

THE LORD GAVE THE WORD

“The Lord gave the word; great was the
company of them that published it.”

Psalms lxxviii: 11.

The Lord gave the Word;
The life of man, the lettered writ,
From day to day, they publish it;
The circling world, the little flower,
They publish it from hour to hour.

The Lord gave the Word;
The wrath of man, the powers of ill,
They publish it against their will.
Then publish it, each conscious heart,
Be of its working, conscious part.
The Lord gave the word.

THE CHAPEL IN THE HEART

Thrice blesséd is the man who keeps,
From other things apart,
A secret room, a holy place,
A chapel in his heart.

For there, when all the world without
Grows dark upon his sight,
He may retire and find within
His chapel full of light:

And there, when jangling sounds of earth
Fall discords on his ear,
He can repair and, undisturbed,
The eternal music hear:

And there he hastens, when the world
Loud praises, to confess,
With sad and true humility,
His own unworthiness:

And there, when with a golden snare
Temptation hems his way,
He quickly turns, with trembling lips
And bated breath to pray.

Thrice blesséd is the man who keeps
From other things apart,
This sacred room, this holy place,
This chapel in his heart.

A SONG IN THE NIGHT

At dead of night my little bird,
My prisoned bird of bounded wing,
By some infrequent feeling stirred,
A sudden song will sing.

I think it lightly sleeps the while,
For slumber seems to sift away
The shriller tones that would beguile
In its diurnal lay.

And he who lies awake and spins
A web of care, must stop to mark
What charm the smitten silence wins,
How tender grows the dark;

And recognize, although annoy
Or care, or grief the heart immerse,
A great simplicity of joy
Is in the universe.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

Do not disdain the royal wine although
From vessel coarse of earthenware it flow:
Nor scorn the truth, whatever it may be,
From any lips that offer it to thee.

The body's role;
To serve the soul.
If it usurp and master—
What disaster!

If the soil of the soul is fallow and fit,
The suitable seed will be wafted to it.

“Which love is the better the old or the new?”
The question is strange. As every morn
The freshness and beauty of earth are reborn

RANDOM THOUGHTS

The balm of the air, in the light, in the dew;—
In every morning, the old love is new.

Perfect joy has aftermath,
Utilizing its excess,
When in conscious quietude
Rapture rests to happiness.

The face that here belongs to me
Everyone but me can see.
Have I other things my own
That to all but me are known?

Who ties a knot and thinks thereby
How he the knot at need untie;
Who, when he lights a fire provides
To check it, if it overrides;
Who, angry, recognizes it
And quickly uses curb and bit;—
He does not lose in life the race
By backward steps he must retrace.

TEARS

The tears of grief are tempest streams
That scar the beaten earth with seams;
Or tears of grief are clearing showers.
The tears of joy refresh the flowers.
The tears that noble actions start
Unfold a rainbow in the heart.

A grief did Youth betide,
He rent his garments, weeping sore
And laid him in the dust and cried
“I never shall be happy more.”

A sorrow came to Age
He slowly bowed his stricken head
As do the winds when tempest rage,
“This, too, will pass away,” he said.

Freest things in earth and sky
Birds and thoughts unfettered fly
Swiftly sweeping, low and high,
Fleetly fleeting far and nigh.

Give me thoughts that upward spring
Like the birds that soar and sing
And to earth on homeward wing
Strength and joy from heaven bring.

JUST ENOUGH

Between Too Little and Too Much
Just Enough suspended swings
If we give it but a touch
Lightly backward, forward springs.

Yet, undaunted by rebuff,
Hope is always trying still
To catch and hold the Just Enough
And believes at last she will.

SQUIBS



THE SONG OF SUNDRY FREETRADERS

“Ah, fredome is a nobill thing,”
As well the poet sang of old;
And trade should be as free as air,
This is the principle I hold.
By name and by conviction free,
A staunch freetrader will I be:—
But—kindly Congress—just for me
Protect my little industrie.

If freedom *is* a noble thing
Exceptions prove the rule they say,
To prove so good a rule I will .
The part of an exception play.
Free trade, free trade for each and all
Who live upon this earthly ball
But—kindly Congress—just for *me*
Protect *my* little industrie !

LIGHTNESS OF HEART

Lightness of Heart! Lightness of Heart!
Why have you left me, Lightness of Heart?
In the morning of life we were seldom apart,
You and I, Lightness of Heart.
But now I must call you and bid you to stay,
And often I call when you do not obey.
Why do you leave me, Lightness of Heart?

Then Lightness of Heart, pirouetting, replies;
"I am merry and thoughtless. I cannot abide
The dull afternoon and the evening tide
With its thronging of thoughts for the future
and past,
With its loving and longing for all that will last.
There's a Gladness of Spirit, serene and morewise,
Who is friendly to sunset and stars in the skies;
I am fair, but they say she is fairer than I.
Call *her*. I dance to the sunset. Good-bye."
"Oh, Lightness of Heart!"—I sigh—
And turn to the beautiful sunset. "Good-bye."

THE DIFFERENCE

There was a man, there was a man
Who hated meddling so,
He saw his neighbor's house burn down,
And closer drew his dressing gown
And let the building go.

There was a man, there was a man
Who always lent a hand.
Whate'er his neighbor did, he'd try
To have a finger in the pie.
They drove him from the land.

An old Diogenes remarked
The difference to hit
Twixt meddling when you do no good
And bravely helping when you should,
Requires a pretty wit.

THE BEAUTY LOVING MR. LEE

There was a young American,
His name was Mr. Lee,
He went to Europe on a tour,
The wonders for to see.

He visited the famous spots
And many a foreign view:
He stood before the Stauerbach,
It was the thing to do.

And "Oh!" he cried in ecstasy
And "Ah!" he cried in bliss,
"A happy land is Switzerland
To own a fall like this!"

But when he turned him home and sought
America once more,

He found his purse was very thin,
And he lamented sore.

He pondered on the swiftest way
His pockets to refill;
Decided near Niagara Falls
To build a mighty mill.

And when its screaming whistle joined
In great Niagara's roar
And awed the smaller mills that rose
Along the littered shore,

He felt his pockets swell and cried
"I soon can go, 'tis plain,
To slake my thirst for beauty at
The Stauerbach again."

THE TEASING TYRANT

I cannot clip the wings of fancy,
So she flutters where she will;
Brings me tales of fair Elysium,
And I listen, listen still.

Till my soul arises; "Fancy,
What you tell me is not true."
"I never said it was," she chuckles,
And is off to pastures new.

She will come again,—I know her,—
Sweetly lying as before,
And my soul will sit and scorn me
While I listen as of yore.

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